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10 August 1966

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director for Science and Technology

SUBJECT: Comments on the JIIRG Report

1. In its report, the JIIRG seeks to cure problems detected in the field of imagery interpretation by promulgating a detailed national tasking plan [redacted] and recommending that USIB establish a new super-organized committee (COMEX) to implement and execute the plan for the community. On examination of the recommended DCID for COMEX, it is apparent that the proposed functions and responsibilities encroach severely on those assigned to USIB's substantive Committees (JAEIC, GMAIC, SIC), NPIC under NSCID 8 and COMOR under DCID No. 2/7.

2. For example, COMEX in implementing the proposed national tasking plan is to ensure the validity and realism of substantive imagery exploitation requirements in light of national needs and is charged with establishing uniform procedures and reporting formats to be used by contributors to a national imagery data base, for coordinating photographic interpretation equipment research and development and for monitoring basic support exploitation performance assigned to national imagery exploitation resources by the National Tasking Plan. The first encroaches on responsibilities of USIB's substantive committees and the other three actions, while good ideas, are clearly within the scope of NPIC's purview and should be implemented by it. Nearly all the other functions assigned to COMEX are now performed by COMOR. Included are readout guidance for first and second phase reporting, decisions relating to use of overseas processing centers for immediate readout of strategic non-satellite reconnaissance missions, establishment of a balance between collection and readout capabilities, insuring that adequate collection guidance is used in programming reconnaissance missions, and determining intelligence community distribution requirements for original reconnaissance materials.

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3. Since the JIIRG envisages retaining the NPIC/COMOR structure, it is predicted the establishment of COMEX would cloud the responsibilities of the existing entities thus creating an impossible coordination atmosphere which would result in referral of an unnecessary number of actions to USIB for decision.

4. The only exploitation area, considered by JIIRG, that is not now wholly or partly under the cognizance of COMOR is third phase or detailed reporting. In Appendix C, JIIRG is concerned that all necessary requirements to meet community needs, say those relating to missiles, may not be expressed since no group now assumes the responsibility to undertake, review, and ascertain that national needs are met with a minimum of duplication. In this respect JIIRG appears to endow the COMEX with an omnipotence which would exceed the substantive capabilities of USIB intelligence committees. It seems preferable that instead of assigning the responsibility for detailed coordination of requirements for third phase reporting to yet another committee that the existing substantive committees, by taking advantage of NPIC's generally parallel substantive organization, could ensure that photo interpreters assigned to each field are employed to the best advantage in fulfilling national requirements. This arrangement would provide the vehicle for providing guidance on interpretation priorities with the least dislocation to existing machinery. In areas which now fall outside the subjects within the jurisdiction of USIB's intelligence committees, such as Southeast Asia, Cuba, Berlin, or Congo problems, the USIB usually establishes a task force which is supported by PI assistance and to whom it provides guidance. Should interagency guidance be required to assure that adequate photo intelligence resources are assigned to these problems, either the CCPC (which quite probably would recommend the establishment of the task force in the first place) or COMOR, could be charged with assuring that adequate assets are brought to bear.

5. We agree with the JIIRG comments that first and second phase reporting is generally well received and that efforts to accomplish improvements in using data derived from one mission in managing the next should be reviewed continually. COMOR is vitally interested in this field since it relies on current readout of targets and quick reporting on areas photographed in monitoring the Board's search and surveillance requirements as expressed in Tab A of USIB-D-41.14/229 (COMOR-D-13/43). Coordination with NPIC and the Army Map Service along these lines is continuing and cost effectiveness tools are being developed.

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6. The separation between the COMOR collection function and the COMEX exploitation function seems artificial in view of the fact that requirements levied by COMOR on the national reconnaissance program are directly responsive to the needs deemed most urgent by elements of the intelligence community responsible for substantive research, current intelligence, and indications. It seems logical to assume that first phase readout should parallel the collection urgency. COMOR, [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] is considering adding an indications working group to its infrastructure. This group will be charged with identifying appropriate targets and seeing to it that a photographic base line on them against which deviations can be assessed is established. Presumably, this task could be assigned to COMEX at the cost of duplication of effort [REDACTED]

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Conclusions:

7. The NPIC/COMOR relationship which now exists is adequate to handling the tasks envisaged for COMEX with the exception of providing third phase reporting coordination. NPIC should be charged with implementing the assignment of basic support exploitation to national imagery organizations, research and development, and the automatic data processing aspects of the national tasking plan, and COMOR should continue its efforts to improve first and second phase readout and in assuring that current intelligence and indications/warning information is adequately reported.

8. The USIB intelligence committees should undertake the responsibility for coordinating third phase reporting in their respective jurisdiction. As Ad Hoc or formal task forces are created by the USIB to cover other intelligence problems or situations, these entities should provide guidance to the photo interpreters assigned to them.

9. The overseas processing centers should be maintained in standby condition and should continue to respond to COMOR's requirement for first phase reporting.

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